

Abraham Lincoln Wendell Phillips

Addresses

By E. M. Irish



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ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

On February 9th, 1907, the Lincoln Club of Kalamazoo County, held its annual banquet at the Auditorium in the City of Kalamazoo. Hon. James R. Garfield was the guest of the evening, and spoke on "The Federal Regulation of Commerce."

The following is the address of E. M. Irish, in response to the toast, "Abraham Lincoln:"

Mr. Toastmaster and Gentlemen:

Man comes from out a mystery, and some are messengers.

Before these pass on into the depths of another mystery, the world must needs listen. Then forevermore it has no power to forget.

Why is it the people love to talk about Lincoln? Why is it that they who have never seen him;—they who have been born since he died, feel personally acquainted with him?

For years even the crickets under the hearthstones have sung his name to the American people. What is the reason for this fireside friendship with a president?

Perhaps I cannot do better than to relate an incident, and explain its meaning as well as I can.

A few years ago an exposition was held in a neighboring state. In one of the art rooms was a statue of Apollo,—the Greek God,—as Thackeray wrote upon a

time,—“One of the Immortal Gods—who are now dead.”

It was carved in the idol stone of Italy,—a marvel of manhood,—a glory of physical beauty. There it poised with lyre in hand and a chiseled song on the marble mouth.

One of the manifold myths of the ancients stood revealed. It was Apollo with his harp, singing the world old song,—the music that built Troy out of the mist bank on Mount Ida's slope.

In the alcove's softened light, its beauty hushed the louder hum of voices, and groups of men and women were stayed in passing, compelled by a master's charm.

Near it was another statue moulded in bronze. The figure was tall and ungainly. The drapery was not—Grecian. It was a Prince Albert coat that seemed to hang in lanky folds, and to need pressing. The face of the bronze was plain and sad.

No thought of art or beauty played on the lingerer's speech,—but gay faces grew serious, and some of them tearful. Then one would murmur to another, “It is Lincoln,”—and the hush on the gazers was like a spell.

Suppose a stranger from a far country to whom our history and the mythology of the ancients were unknown—an exile from some distant star—had wandered through the gallery. Perhaps with the artist longing in his heart he might have looked at the two figures and the groups around them.

Suppose he asked one of us, Who are those men, and why the contrast in the way they touch your people? One is beautiful. The other is awkward and looks out

of place so near it. When did they live, and what did they do?

What could we tell him?

Sir: One of them never lived, except in fable,—except as the artist's dream of beauty lives always.

Phidias and Praxiteles and the sculptors who came after them never saw him. They have seen his prisoned apparition peering out from the unhewn stone. It haunted them, and often they tried with their cunning to set the white eidolon free. But they could never quite do it. The man you see there, never lived in middle earth—never on its land or sea. It is only an effort to catch an ideal—a dream of the sensuous beauty of our race.

With his harp he is building a city to the music of the immortals. That was the way they put up buildings in the olden days. Now it is one of the lost arts—so we call it a legend. We of the moderns use a steam hoist. Apollo runs the engine and whistles them up.

Ah, but the stranger might say, If this race of yours has such classic ideals of strength and beauty, why do all the groups pause with reverence before the other figure; why the trace of sadness on the homely face, and why the hushed and tearful homage that is paid it?

Sir: Because this one lived and walked our earth and knew its people. When they see him in bronze or homespun they think of a great, kindly, noble heart, the gift of power could never spoil. Over that image the memory of a republic broods, and the spirit beauty of its meaning creeps into the looker's soul.

The stranger might say, Tell me about this man of your planet?

Well, we can try to.

He was born in an old Kentucky home—in a log cabin. It was on the twelfth day of February, 1809. Two days later and he would have been a valentine. It was in our dim barbaric days—called in story—the nineteenth century.

He had a noble pioneer woman for a mother. Her name before she was married was Nancy Hanks. On that February day in the morning of eighteen hundred, in that little cabin, the first Lincoln club was formed.

It is the Prima Donna by the cradle side who sings the grand songs of the ages, and they build men.

The boy did not have the culture and training of the schools. Sometimes an itinerant teacher happened along. He "Boarded" round,"—"Spherical board"—it has been called—and taught what little he knew himself.

In one way, however, frontier education was a success. It was possible to study the spelling book. Spelling bees were among the swell functions of the backwoods four hundred, and the boys used to bet that Abe Lincoln could spell down all comers. Don't take this as a tip, sir; because it would not be safe to bet that way on every president of the United States.

Among Lincoln's early books were the Bible and Pilgrim's Progress, a life of George Washington, and the poems of Robert Burns.

From this kind of reading he grew up with the habit of using language in a simple, direct way. Even when it

was put into a political speech people knew what it meant.

Afterwards he studied law. At first it troubled him to understand it. I don't wonder at that; for I have just been reading the amendments to the Interstate Commerce acts, and the railroad rate bill.

Then he concluded it was of no use to try to be a lawyer unless he studied geometry. He borrowed a book and tackled it out under the trees. Its clear and absolute reasoning attracted him. It always came out at the truth. One of the things he found set down there, was that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points.

Later in life he tried for weary months to convince certain generals that it applied to the distance between a point called Washington, and one known as Richmond.

Still another axiom must have made an impression on his mind, judging by the way he stuck to it for four years. It was that the whole is greater than any of its parts.

Finally he became a country lawyer. A country lawyer is sometimes like Kipling's British soldier, his "Tommy Atkins." Kipling tells us that "Single men in barracks don't grow into plaster saints."

Stephen A. Douglas, who grew up with Lincoln, once said of him in a speech:

"He was then as good at telling an anecdote as now. He could beat any of the boys at wrestling or running a foot race, in pitching quoits or tossing a copper; could ruin more liquor than all of the boys of the town together; and the dignity and impartiality, with which he presided at a horse race or fist fight, excited the admiration and won the praise of everybody."

From what I have heard the old folks say in Southern Illinois, I conclude that the Douglas knew what he was talking about.

It is not worth while for us to try to make saints of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Those who were near to them have told us so.

I am glad Lincoln had some faults. It brings him nearer to the rest of us. He could understand men better.

Goethe said that it was only by acting foolishly that he learned to talk wisely.

The youngster himself seemed to have a prophetic forecast that he might improve later on—for in boyhood days he wrote in his copy book these lines :

"Abraham Lincoln,
His hand and pen,
He will be good,
But God knows when."

As he grew into public life he became an orator,—and at the same time a man who saw the truth clearly, and had the independence of character to speak out his convictions. He took pains to understand thoroughly what he was to talk about. He was gifted with common sense,—and his clearness of statement carried meanings with certainty.

Orators are so plentiful now, that they will sometimes pay to get into banquets where they can hear themselves talk. Many of them are dangerous if allowed to run at large. They acquire facility of expression. They read the newspapers and encyclopedias,—and the magazines, I am afraid,—a little more than the rest of us. With

a watered capital of superficial knowledge they set up wisdom factories. They gain notoriety and become agitators instead of safe leaders. Some of them make us think of what a certain Englishman said of Lord Macaulay. He said he wished he could be as sure of anything as Macaulay was of everything.

Socrátes said all men were sufficiently eloquent in what they understood. Another writer tells us that "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

The talker whose mind is ripe on a subject; who is sincere and sees with impartial eyes; who tries to be fair; can use the gift of language so people will not only listen with understanding hearts, but with believing minds. He will speak words that are alive. As some one said, "Cut them and they will bleed."

Lincoln could do all that. He was all that.

Today his speeches are considered by good critics to be models of sterling English. But at the time they were given to the public,—even his first inaugural is an illustration,—the small grammarians took offense. They were of the lawnmower type. They would run their rattle-trap reapers over a green sward, until it could not billow with the breeze and show the change of sunlight and shadow to the passing cloud.

Those people are supposed to be dead now—like Thackeray's gods. They were akin to the traveler who went to Switzerland and saw the Alps. When asked how he liked them, he said, "It is a likely country, but it needs grading badly."

Once Lincoln was a soldier. When the Black Hawk

war broke out, he became captain of a volunteer company of backwoodsmen. Splendid American soldiers they make, because they can shoot rifles so the bullets hit the mark.

His company stole some whiskey and went on a drunk one night. He was blamed for it by superior officers, and made to wear a wooden sword for two days.

It makes a difference at what time of life we get the things that are coming to us. This was after he had done wanting a tin trumpet, a drum and a wooden sword. Doubtless during those two days he realized that he never had really wanted such an outfit. It was the discipline of the grotesque, akin to the knightly order of the dunce cap.

But no one dreamed that the wooden saber was to shine down the lists of history, with a light that would pale the Camelot fire on the steel of King Arthur's Excalibur.

He was drilling his recruits one day, and they were marching in company front,—twenty men abreast. He wanted to move them through a gateway. But he said he could not for the life of him think of the order to make them go "Endways," as he called it, so they could get through. Then he said: "This company is dismissed for two minutes, when it will fall in again on the other side of the gate."

The war was over too soon for him to get into a fight. He went back to civil life, a reformed tin patriot,—like many a veteran who saved his country from invasion, in the Spanish-American war.

When he was captain of that company of volunteers, no astrologer of the midnight read the magnet spark of his nativity. No one told us where it would draw him.

He was to become the great captain of the greatest volunteer army the world ever knew. As the tents were struck, and the embers of its camp fires grew cold;—as it was disbanding through the beautiful gates of a new era, to form again as citizens on the other side,—a stray shot across the falling canvass, was to lay him low on the field of honor:—dead with the white stars of the republic draped across his silent heart,—and no stain upon them except the ruddy drops of patriot blood.

Around his rude cradle the wolfkins of the wilderness howled. When he lay down for his long rest, it was in the nation's capital; and over his last cradle,—the one that never rocks,—the people and their statesmen—the soldiers and the field marshals of his native land,—and even a brave and generous enemy—wept.

But how did this happen?

He was born of the race of the Anglo-Saxons; and stranger, I must tell you they are a scrappy folk. When no outsider is pitching on to them, they will fight with each other. They do not have as many revolutions as the South American states,—but they take themselves very seriously;—they have bigger ones, and keep them up longer. When we have a family row, many crowns must crack, my lord.

We speak of Lincoln, and say it is after the war? After what war? Every year the soldiers of the North,—and of the South,—drop the bloom of springtime on

their comrades' graves. They may consecrate those mounds with pale or crimson blossoms, and no partisan fervor makes the color significant.

But turn back in our story to the Isle of Britain. There you may read that the red rose of Lancaster and the white one of York, were emblems on different sides, of civil wars more fierce and bitter than our own.

The cavaliers of the Stuart, and the Ironsides of Cromwell! Scotland's mountain and lowland! Cullo-den's dreary heath, where the tartan plaids were rolled in blood! The Tower of London and the scaffold! The Colonial Revolution! And of course when nothing else was doing in the free for all, the dew on the sham-rock grew red, and the flag of green Erin was flapping over an Irish rebellion!

These allusions recall periods when this tribe we belong to, flashed their swords, or their shillalahs, in each other's faces, and Merry England's hearts were split with English steel.

They were a Christian people. For many years they were so anxious to save each other's souls, that they fought civil wars over the proper way to do it. But when they killed a fellow on the other side, they knew that his soul was lost.

Much of the modern trouble has been over taxes, and property. The Anglo-Saxon is an ardent patriot. He loves his country and thinks it the best the sun ever shone on—provided of course his party is running the machine. On general principles he is always ready to die for it. But let the tax gatherer call, and he is likely

to do two things. In the first place he will be like a man who went to sleep in church. One of the deacons was passing the hat and nudged him with it. The man woke up, looked at the hat, and said, "No, tain't mine." Then he looked the other way. The deacon was lucky to get his hat back. If the tax officers keep on nudging—our patriots are likely to bristle up, and again they are ready—to die for their country.

If King George had not waked up the colonies with his taxation cudgel, Michigan might be in England today.

In Kalamazoo, when we doubt whether the warlike spirit of the Continental lives, we ask the citizens to pay a paving tax.

Now when the orators stirred the question of property rights in African slaves, the electrodes of revolution became charged. Part of our people believed in the extension of slavery, and part did not. Some would let it stay as it was, and others wanted to wipe it out altogether.

And stranger, the speakers on both sides kept saying things, until the radical wings of the different parties were live-wired with the same electric load that bristles the hair on a couple of bull dogs, when the orators around them say, "Sic 'em, Tige!"

The man in bronze told us that a house divided against itself could not stand; that our union could not exist half slave and half free.

He was elected president. When he took his seat seven states had seceded. He did not want war. In his first inaugural he pleaded with an earnest and reasoning

tenderness against it. But he was talking to Anglo-Saxons after the orators had slapped up their fighting blood. The scrap was on.

Then his colors drooped on Sumpter's wreck.

Around the Charleston port, cathedral bells and towery chimes from old St. Michael's, pealed the matins of revolution.

What would the vespers tell?

Sweetly over island and ocean the melodies of St. Michael's played. But a goblin echo mocked—like the refrain on the glooming dawn that Coligny the Huguenot heard. First the bell of St. Germain moaning out its medieval passion:—then the assassins of Bartholomew,—and his silvery hair dank with blood.

Over the face of the man in bronze a solemn shadow came. His kindly heart could not look unmoved at bloodshed among his countrymen. But he stood bravely up beside the quivering liberty mast, where the old flag of Yorktown and Lundy's Lane was floating from the halyards. Then he was jeered at by his enemies and called a babboon, because he was not a handsome man. Often he lacked the support of men he had counted with him. Some of the people wanted to go faster than he did, and others did not want to go at all. He was fixed much as a teamster was, who bought a pair of horses, and found that one of them was a puller from "Cluck," and the other was balky. Someone asked him if his new team agreed. He said, "You bet they do. One of them is willing to do all the work, and the other is willing he should."

Part of the north wanted emancipation at once, and part did not want it at all. And he had the loyal slave states of the border to satisfy. If these states that stayed in the union had thrown their war dice with the south, a successful confederacy might have been the outcome;—and after that,—old-fashioned Scotch and English war on the boundary.

The union men who lived in these states had trouble in keeping them loyal. They needed protection from the radical wing of the northern abolitionists. In Lincoln they found not only a statesman, but one of the most subtle politicians of his day.

The man raised on the border knew where the balance of power lay. He tried to bring both sides to compensated emancipation. If the states along the Dixie line had accepted his plan, it is probable that it could have been carried out.

He was very earnest in the matter. He figured that the slaves in the border states could be bought for the money it would cost to carry on the war for ninety days,—and that the purchase would practically end the bloodshed.

He recommended the plan in a message to Congress, but the interested states did not respond.

The only result was that in 1862, Congress bought all the slaves in the District of Columbia for about a million dollars, and liberated them.

People have forgotten that the government of the United States was once a slave buyer.

When Lincoln was in Congress in 1848, he intro-

duced a bill for gradual and compensated emancipation in the District. But it received no attention.

It was the wisest solution of the slavery question that was ever proposed.

North and South should have worked it out without any war at all. But that would not have been in accord with the traditions of the Anglo-Saxons. Before they could reach a consensus of opinion, it has generally seemed necessary for them to have a concussion of opinion.

There were times when he was anything but the idol of the country. His soldiers died in fever swamps and fell before the rifle sleet. His generals were defeated. Some scamps at the North made the army blankets and soldiers' overcoats of shoddy. The war taxes ran high. He was abused by many of the men who elected him.

Wendell Phillips, whose mouth was a Maxim gun of anti-slavery invective, called him:

"The tortoise president,"—

He said he was a "First rate second rate man," and "a Pawn on the political chess board, whose value was in his position."

Slander is like death:—it loves a shining mark.

The shadow of domestic sorrow gathered over his household. Amid the cares that perplexed him, he lost the son who was the comfort of his heart. The pathos of the look you notice, grew deeper in his eyes, and at times seemed sad as Gethsemane. But he grew up with the army and it loved him. Through all his troubles he had a patience that never turned away from the troubles of

his people. He managed to drive the team with the balky horse. He became an evolution of the civil war.

By and by, the people began to realize that he had been honest and sincere and fair to all; that he had been unselfish, and the real friend of his country. He had never used his great power to uplift himself. He had been handling the Anglo-Saxons in a civil scrap; and no man in their history had ever done so well with so large a contract. They believed he always told them the truth, and they gave him a place in their hearts with two of their other leaders who were truth tellers:—King Alfred and George Washington.

But as the chaff is fanned away by the winnowing winds of history, he seems nearer than the others, and we begin to know him for the commoner of the centuries.

When he left us the war was just over. North and South were bitter toward each other, and we did not have a united country at the farewell to the dead chieftain.

It was sixteen years later when the English speaking—fraternities, had the first real family reunion in their history. Then we met around the open mound of the soldier who sleeps in Lake View by the Ohio shores of Erie.

He also was our president, and fell at his post of duty. All the many warring elements of the past—all who spoke the mother tongue—went with him, hand in hand, down to the marge of the mystic river.

North and South together! England! Ireland! Scotland! What buried memories of old wars! Great Britain and the states!

When the cable sped the tidings of his passing—within a few brief hours on roofs where the “Banner of England blew,” and over the republic’s untroubled sections, the two flags once hostile, trailed at half mast together. Across the tides, old bells that rang in Hampden’s time, in the youth of the people’s hope, rocked slowly in their towers. As their solemn music stirred the patriot dust of the English centuries,—we might almost have heard it,—blending with the *tolling* of St. Michael’s;—chiming like the sweet and homelike bells of Shandon,—two kindred nations’ peace and sympathy.

Of the long line of leaders gone before,—to him it was given to bring all the Anglo-Saxon’s in peaceful union around his resting place.

How eloquently could those impassioned lips, grown silent under the seal that speech has never broken, have spoken of such occasion if another had been in his place!

Our thought goes backward to the past and returns to this room again, and our eyes grow misty as we welcome the guest of the evening. For to him—even part of his country’s history, is a memory of his youth wherein the stranger may not mingle.

Lincoln said the two battles of the Anglo-Saxon civil wars that meant most to the people, were Marston Moor where Cromwell crushed the Stuarts, and Gettysburg.

The slaughter at Gettysburg hurt the president deeply. It was on this field he made the short but never to be forgotten speech, that has been classed with the oration of Pericles over the Grecian dead.

Before the battle was fought, a change had come over the armies. When the first call for volunteers was made, light hearted boys flocked gaily to the camps, for what they thought would be a ninety day picnic.

This race of ours loves an army,—till it comes to footing the bills. The lust of martial glory has been the passion of its generations. It has too often passed for the noble sentiment of patriotism. An English colonel said a few years ago, that fighting a human enemy was better sport than elephant shooting, or potting tigers. He called it man hunting. Lincoln was not that kind of sportsman. No true patriot is.

But when the flag slid down the staff at Sumter, the softening air of April grew keen with plangent drums and the lilt of bugles. The fledgling soldiers heard them play the camp calls,—the drill,—the rolic jingle of the reveille;—which the boys will tell you, kept saying, “I can’t get ’em up in the morning.” They heard the mess call; and they took to it the way chickens do, to the ruck-tuck of the dough spoon on the feed pan:—for the poor fellows thought it would always mean three square meals a day. They learned the long roll. But they had never heard the mournful trumpet taps, sounding,—“Lights out,”—above a soldier’s grave. They knew not the guard line, nor the solitary post of the midnight sentinel. They had never helped to kill their fellow men by thousands; nor had they seen their bleeding comrades die.

By and by the marches and the many battles came; and the northern and southern regiments had grown into veteran soldiers and efficient armies.

On both sides of the Blue Ridge, they were marching to what I suppose the sporting Colonel would call a summer shooting meet. The prizes they were to shoot for, were new target ranges on the soil of the north. The bull's eyes were human hearts beating beneath the flannel shirts of fellow citizens. They came in touch at Gettysburg.

In those battalions the flower of the republic's youthful manhood trooped. They were no longer picnic soldiers. They were seasoned by camp and march;—reckless survivors of battle death rolls; and hardened to military murder:—the two finest armies in the world.

Over them the mountains' wild-winged eagles reeled, as if they already scented the noble carrion of onset.

The massing columns that tossed the banners of Lee, deployed into the long battle fronts; and the heart-wave of the Southland, swelled against the blue harness, and a newer age to come.

Once more the mad-lipped pipers blew; and the doomful horns of Hades were winding out the order,—“Commence firing.”

From cloudy deeps above the cannon's revel, (or was it the mellow throated skylark's distant tune?) the bugler of the innumerable legions floated the call:—“Lie down;” and from the two armies, thousands of American soldiers heard,—and were still,—on their last field.

Many of them were boys from eighteen to twenty years old. As Pericles said,—“Youth perished from the land like spring from the year.”

It was the wickedest scrap in Anglo-Saxon history.

It was late enough in the story of the English lands for us to have known better. Somebody had made a terrible mistake.

There they sleep ; and so sleep the soldiers and sailors who went down in the other battles of our civil war—and in the battles of our other civil wars.

O spellful wonder of heraldry—the wind blown flag of the legion—the glimpse of cross or color that made bright the dying eyes of patriot and crusader ! When its folds shine across the rolling smoke, and lure the lines onward through the volleys ; surely it is the beautiful guidon of the Angel of Death, that blinds humanity to the crime of Cain.

It was not strange that the great kindly heart of the president, fell sad and grieving for his country and its lost :—not strange that the tragedy sank into his soul ; nor that a message grew there in all sincerity, that stands with the mighty words of history.

For both sides of the warring brotherhood claimed his heart.

The trouble would not have come if all good citizens had thought alike. Honest men on both sides believed they were right.

The military leader of the South, was sincere and honest hearted as England's Hampden. His father had been a cavalry officer in the army of the Revolution. There they called him "Light Horse Harry." The son was an American soldier himself. But we had come to the parting of the ways, and he heard the homing call of

his state, to the colors of the Old Dominion. In the words of "My Maryland,"—the passion hymn,—the Marseillaises of Dixie,—'Virginia did not call in vain.'

Even so many a Southern soldier looked wistfully at the old flag, and turned back to his native state.

Even so with sad heroic spirit, the Huguenot lover on the Eve of St. Bartholomew, pushed aside the white badge of Catherine.

The conscience of Lee was his guide. His nature was frank and simple. His courage was high, and when the war had passed, he became a patriot of the New America. Because of this, both sides have given him a place in memory that belongs to no other.

Whenever our unhappy story is told, the South pauses at his name to drink to its idol, the golden toast of the reunion season; and now with bended head the North joins with it.

Brave and splendid soldier of adversity! Noble citizen of the aftertime! You will always live in the memorial heart of your country, and the chevaliers of all its silent armies salute you.

Pericles, the soldier, statesman, patriot, orator, of the Grecian land, had a long homely head. The crowds used to jeer him, and call him "Squill head," "Onion head." The generations have always mocked their Saviours.

But what the Grecian orator said in that beautiful garden of Athens, away in the Mayday of popular government, may well be applied to Lincoln.

"Of illustrious men," said Pericles, "The whole world is the grave, and not only does the inscription upon

columns in their native land point it out; but in countries which are not their own, there dwells with everyone an unwritten memorial of the heart, rather than that of a material monument."

The world needs no Old Mortality, chipping out the renaissance of memory on marbles gray with the ages' moss, to remind it of Pericles and of Lincoln. And one of them spoke twenty-three centuries ago.

The Grecian's thought still lives. The language it was moulded in, is in a silent tongue.

When the grammar that Lincoln studied by the pine knot's fitful flicker, is dead to all but the student of antiquity, the cheerful lamp of his steadfast soul, will light the onward glooms.

His brain was strong and sagacious. The heart that bent its purpose was sincere,—and as near as may be in mortal harness,—it was unselfish.

He was shepherd of the bitter pastures of sorrow,—and his great and simple nature held a deep well of solace for those who languished. Statesman and broken soldier,—grieving widow,—mother and little child,—his own erring ones,—and even the captive foeman,—could draw from its brimming pool.

Loyalty to duty and his fellowman, it was not in his nature to shirk.

But, says the stranger, Was the sad face always sad?

O, no. The man in bronze could have been represented as telling a funny story; and then he would have looked pleasant enough to have his picture taken. Only that is not the way we like best to remember him.

He was the yarn spinner of his generation. His stories were like the arrows of Robin Hood,—icatheered to sureness with the gray goose wing. They sped to the mark and cleft the peeled white of the willow wand. He could wrap the whole meaning of a campaign in one little story and hand out the package to the audience.

He told them at cabinet meetings. Grave secretaries like Mr. Chase and Mr. Stanton, had their dignity, and it is said their modesty also, shocked by his levity.

If a story illustrated his point, he shot it at them, even if it was a wanton-wise one. He had grown up in the pioneer west. He read Burns in his boyhood.

The same pen that wrote "The Cotter's Saturday Night," and "Bonny Doon," and "Highland Mary,"—also wrote some of the most ribald rhymes in the language. But at the time they were written, they meant more than vulgarity. They punctured the inflated tires of hypocrisy. Robert Burns was a man for all that.

The same voice that told the cabinet stories, was also the voice of a poet:—one who loved his fellow men. When the tides of insurrection were at flood around him, he said to the South:

"We are not enemies but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

This is one of the best short poems in the language.

The civil war is over; but the Anglo-Saxons are not

at rest. If Lincoln were alive today, we should hear his counseling voice, talking in the same strain to capital and labor,—telling them one could not live without the other; and that they must be friends and not enemies.

He had faith in the people, and so may we. The outlook is often troublesome, but when they understand,—and they always do understand in the end,—the people are right. And stranger, today we have the safest government the world ever knew.

Well, the man from the other planet might say: You have not made the parable very clear. But I gather from it that this race of yours is superstitious and deploras death as a calamity. Do you know it is the best of living:—the gentlest and most kindly of the material offices of nature? Though your lives are like nights of trouble, Death is the portal of the morning.

And yet you touch for me, those “Mystic chords of memory,” that wind through all the worlds of space.

Your Wordsworth wrote:

“The soul that riseth with us,
Our life’s star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.”

Your man in bronze was an emigrant from the outland isles;—a messenger to your dim coast of earthland, He was one of those who came with a truth, and lived its meaning. The revelation points to something better than the scheming of an age gone mad for gold and glory.

And you killed him as you did the other Saviours!
But is there more to tell?

Yes. He lived to see the flag that fell on the shell wrecked fortress, rise over a union that held no slave; and then the end came at a crisis. Twelve days after Lee had surrendered, the fatal shot was fired. The lights of Ford's theatre went glimmering out for President Lincoln. But in their place,—as you make me think,—the wistful eyes must have seen the red of flushing dawn on eternal highlands;—the misty peaks above his native port.

The tragedy of his taking off, had much to do with making us realize how great a man we had entertained unawares. The South lost its best friend;—the one it needed most in the reconstruction period.

And now, O voyager from the Pleiades:—the booming anger of the field guns at Gettysburg, is hallowed in the vanished years. Long ago the rifle rollings fainted down the Blue Ridge passes. The phantom rhythm from that elfin lute is becalmed in the sun-god's marble trance. It shaped the towers of legended Troy, and gave them to flames in war over a woman's beauty.

But the wizard chisels of Praxiteles and Michael Angelo, never carved a man like Lincoln. God made him.

If the words of Pericles are wafted down to us from the springtime of freedom, how far will the voice of Lincoln reach?

It will cadence on through the evolution of popular liberty. Far in the autumns of history, its music will help to build the many mansions of republics yet to be,—the happy homes—with no fraternal blood stain on their lintels:—and as he said at Gettysburg, "There shall be

new births of freedom," and "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

WENDELL PHILLIPS

If you would know the loves and hates of our kind—if you would see humanity's strength and mortal weakness—look in a biographical dictionary. It is the personal column of the ages. It is like a session of the day of judgment, where the righteous old lady hoped to be rewarded with a front seat. Once there, she supposed she could listen comfortably to everybody's secrets.

The lives of Plutarch, the monograph master of antiquity, are more to the world than the heroes of fiction:—for they preserve the specimens and illustrate the natural history of our kind.

The persons whose biographies are obituaries in country newspapers, do not differ much from those whose lives are a part of history.

Some law unknown to us, develops the man who is to play on the wider stage. You may call it chance if you will. In the long run what is surer than chance? One throw of the dice is uncertain: but the gambler knows the limit of safety in a thousand throws.

A man crosses a bridge, and it is burned behind him. Then between his future and the old life he might have lived, a river runs, and fate's salted tide never runs dry. He may take a step in crime, and afterwards be numbered with outlaws.

Sometimes a barrier is passed, and the impulse is along the pathway of a higher destiny. At its end the flames may be burning bright around a martyr's stake.

In all lands that have allowed citizens' meetings, the

people have listened from the earliest times to their public speakers. Some of the orations will live while thoughts are printed.

But it is only here and there along the generations—that an orator speaks a message to humanity.

Out of the age of Athenian culture, in its setting of a silent language, shines the Kohinoor—the great diamond of eloquence—the oration of Demosthenes on the crown. But the subject was the one he was best acquainted with, and most interested in—*Demosthenes—himself*. It involved his right to a civic crown of Athens.

From the Roman forum and senate, in the mellowing tongue of Ausonian Italy, the classic cadences of Cicero flow. They charm us with the philosophic thought of the modern of the ancients. But Cicero had a hobby,—an odd one for a man,—it was *vanity*. He was a luxurious egotist. He talked more about himself than any other orator who ever lived. His remarks were generally flattering—to Cicero. He secured most of the civic crowns of his generation.

The phonographic scroll of American Statesmanship rolls out the basso of Webster. But the stately eloquence,—like the sub-base of a cathedral organ,—was played to an ambition of middle earth. The great New England Statesman would have worn the civic crown of the republic. He would have been its president.

No literary, no forensic criticism, can differentiate the herald with a message from the orator of personal ambition. It is the man behind the words who tells the story,—tells it as the Plutarch of his generation will one

day see it. And the life of his times, the audiences, and the cause he stands to plead for, must always be understood before we can see him as he is.

After all is sifted, if you will still have fiction, behold you shall find it,—even in a biographical dictionary.

There is a story of the thought that vitalized New England, and of an orator who was one of its evolutions.

One side of the story has long been read from a medal of the world's legion of honor. It might have been struck from virgin gold in the mint of liberty. That side of the decoration has glittered in Fourth of July orations for a hundred years.

Let me hold it up before you for a moment. Boston is the metropolitan pride of New England. If you don't believe it,—ask Boston. In the early years of the Nineteenth Century, its good people would point to a lineage that had pulsed down from a band of persecuted exiles. They sailed over the lonely ocean on a pilgrimage of civil and religious freedom. They landed at Plymouth Rock, and founded a noble state. It was consecrated to liberty of conscience, while its flag tinted the Massachusetts shore with the colors of promise to the oppressed of all lands.

My fellow countrymen, that declamation might stand as a composite quotation from a hundred New England orators.

Have I showed the Fourth of July side of the medal fairly?

Look at the reverse.

Boston Town, with the blue blood of Plymouth in

its veins, could look backward if it chose, and see Roger Williams—banished from the Salem colony, because he advocated what the Puritans emigrated for—religious liberty.

The good old Baptist parson became a tramp. He went out into the wilderness, a wastrel from the altars of refuge, and planted the State of Rhode Island. But it never became a large state.

When he realized that he had put many a mile of primeval bog and shrubbery between him and the Puritan magistrates, he founded a city, and named it—"Providence."

The Quaker woman was strapped to the New England whipping post. As the whistling lash,—the yowling Puritan cat, began to bite, she could reflect that she was tied up in a country consecrated to freedom of worship.

After all the whippings they received, no wonder the Quakers kept still in meeting.

As the victim of witchcraft passed under the shadow of the gallows tree, she knew that the people came to America to escape from the superstitions of the past.

The Indian, crowded back from his home, and his hunting grounds, took notice that when any of his enterprising neighbors developed liberal views of the Great Spirit, he could get even by laying for them along the trail to Rhode Island.

The expatriates from the peaceful province of Acadie—the mild mannered, blue nosed farmers of Nova Scotia—were torn from their homes by a Puritan army.

Father, mother, wife and child, were separated, and scattered over the Western settlements. Lovers were estranged as Longfellow sang in *Evangeline*. As the light stole into their pastoral hearts, they could see the ideal of Puritan liberty.

Those Boston people could remember a time when their colonial ancestors held Africans in slavery. When it did not pay to keep them longer, they sold some of them to the Southerners.

Slavery was abolished in England and its colonies, by the growth of a newer commercial age. It could not compete with free labor in New England and the Middle States, and it disappeared. It would have vanished from the South, if Eli Whitney had not invented the cotton gin and made slave labor thrifty.

If slave labor had paid at the North, the war of the rebellion would not have happened. The United States might not have abolished slavery yet. Most reformers like to reform other people.

Boston could go up Bunker Hill monument, and see the fugitive slave from the cotton fields recaptured on its streets and dragged back to bondage. That bondsman could turn his eyes to the flag of the West. As it floated over his fetters, he could reflect that it was the emblem of liberty. He was in the land of the Mayflower and Lexington—where Paul Revere's voice rose like a reveille on the wind of freedom's morning. He was in the city whose school children welcomed Lafayette back to America. Then he knew what a blessed privilege it was, to live in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

I wish it were in my power to make three pictures of New England life stand out before you in triple antithesis, as they did in reality seventy years ago. But they grow dim across the gloaming of a century. The high lights of history should be thrown backward on them now. And then it would take a better artist's touch than mine, to restore those pictures, after the fashion of old paintings that have faded on the canvass.

One would be the high-bred aristocracy of those old and wealthy families of Boston. Another would be the influence exerted upon them by another aristocracy—the one that was ruled by the umpire of the American game of dollars, where the cotton row was the king row. The last, would be the little band of philanthropists, despised and hated by both the others—the anti-slavery societies—mostly women.

When they were together they made conventions that would fill a fair sized room. There were sharp featured old New England ladies with steel bowed spectacles. There were men in clean shirts, with the ravelings snipped off from the wristbands, and shiny threadbare coats, kept carefully brushed for their Sunday best. At some of them were Garrison and Quaker Whittier, Lydia Maria Child and Wendell Phillips, and the thoughtful eyes of Emerson. In many instances the expenses of delegates to the conventions were paid by small contributions from the neighbors who held the same belief.

All of them might not have communed in fashionable churches, where the lowly Gallilean's sacrament brimmed up in golden beakers. But they could sing psalm tunes.

They knew the shorter catechism, and could lead in prayer with the nasal fervor of Yankee piety.

They took up collections to pay for printing anti-slavery tracts; and some of them saved the money they gave, by going without butter on their bread, and drinking their tea and coffee without—West India molasses.

They were in short, "The damned abolitionists," who were in for reforms that nobody wanted.

Men had made up their minds that a league with the cotton monarch of the South was a necessity to the commercial prosperity of the North. The culture of Boston was convinced that African slavery was the culture of cotton. The men who controlled capital, and the avenues to preferment in business and politics, were allies of the barons who swayed the cotton feudalism. Slavery with the cold wage of materialism, bought—not the silence,—but the aggressive eloquence of priest and politician.

On Sunday, the Boston merchant dropped his gold in the contribution box, to send missionaries to the heathen in Africa. He forgot that the Bible was refused to three million Africans in America, and that missionaries might be needed at home for the Boston pagans. On week days he figured on the balance of the Southern trade. He eased his conscience with the lulling cocaine of sophistry, and stuffed his ears with sea island batten.

How many people can be ideal Christians on Sunday and realistic sinners the rest of the week! How dared that little band of abolitionists raise their lonely voices against the passion of the hour! They said, it is wrong

to keep men, women and their children in bondage. It is wrong to scourge them till the blood of the Anglo-Saxon, that lust has blended with the dusky tide of Libya, falls trickling from the lash. Your business is the price of blood;—We demand emancipation.

Then they were hooted and mobbed, tarred and feathered; and Garrison was dragged with ropes through the streets of Boston.

I mention these historical facts, in order to show the fortitude and courage of that pilgrim community in achieving civil and religious liberty for themselves, and also the fortitude with which they endured the civil and religious slavery of others.

Ah, Hawthorne! Child of the Puritans, mystic of the placid thought deeps, and dreamy prose poet of New England! Did you not once write of the Pilgrim fathers:

“Let us thank God for having given us such ancestors; and let each successive generation thank him not less fervently, for being one step further from them in the march of the ages?”

What was the cotton slave to starched and broad-clothed Boston, that it should drop trade for him? He was the human machine that made the cotton bale. He was a barbarian, ignorant and black, and he smelt bad.

In this world, as the hallowing years go by, we forget their grief and misfortune. It is well we can.

Above the gray and blue of the sombre past, Antietam, grassy mounded, is sinking down in the level sward of history. We hail once more the brotherhood of the states. But it is only fifty years since the quadrone

brunette stood on the auction block at New Orleans—perhaps with the passion given Caucasian beauty mantling in her cheeks. And the cotton bank account bought her body and soul—bought her, it might be—of the man who sold his own flesh and blood. If the purchaser did not want the baby in her arms, some one else bought it.

Yet in anniversary and Fourth of July oration, the breaking waves of eloquence dashed high, on a stern and rockbound coast of pride. On the brimming tides of rhetoric, the Mayflower sailed convoy to the ship of state.

And nobody dared to call the *e pluribus unum* eagle off his perch.

Since the world began, where has an orator found such a cause to plead in an enlightened land?

Were the audiences from that community able to appreciate language,—the orator's deadly weapon,—his Maxim gun, I might call it?

Ladies and gentlemen, that populace in its childhood had been feruled through John Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a passing book. Its student youth had pored over Roman syntax, until they could read the orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero in the original Latin.

Now that we have looked over the audiences, let us try to introduce the orator who was to speak to them.

Into a family of comfortable wealth that belonged to the higher classes of that Plymouth aristocracy, and traced its ancestry back to the Pilgrim colony, on the 29th day of November, 1811, Wendell Phillips was born. The historic memorials of the revolution clustered around his boyhood. He grew up in sight of Bunker Hill Monu-

ment and Faneuil Hall, and the old South Church. He formed in line with those Boston school children at the gala they waived to Lafayette. He was educated at the Boston Latin School, at Harvard College, and at Harvard Law School. Judge Story was then conducting the legal institute—name that shines steadfast among the sages of American jurisprudence.

Here was a young man of wealthy and influential family—of engaging personal presence. His father was the first mayor of Boston. He had been educated in the patrician schools of New England. Already of brilliant promise as a public speaker, he was fitted to enter the legal profession. He stood within the charmed circle of that Eastern society. He entered upon the practice of the law in Boston, and continued it for several years.

When I was a boy, I heard him say from the platform, speaking of that time:—"I was in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity,—that is—I was a young lawyer struggling for a practice." I did not know what he meant at the time. But a few years later his meaning began to dawn on me. It was one of his extravaganzas, and he had found that people liked lawyers—roasted.

One reason why he would not stay at the bar, was that it was bound by an oath to support the constitution of the United States, and the constitution upheld slavery.

If he had continued in the profession, he might have stood with Rufus Choate, and Harrison Gray Otis, in the front rank of the Boston talent. No lawyer who has read his argument before the legislature of Massachusetts, on the impeachment of Judge Loring, could doubt

his professional genius. The prestige of his family promised opportunity.

But soon an episode occurred in his history. The episode became an epic. He took a stage-coach ride with a beautiful young lady. It proved as fetching as an automobile ride might today. Not so fast, but she had him—"Going some."

The lady's name was Ann Green, afterwards Ann Phillips. She was an ardent devotee of the anti-slavery cause.

When the Western African looks back to the nursery of emancipation, he sees the liberties of his race nestled by a little band of women. It was the heart of women that refused to stifle the cry of humanity. It was a woman who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It was a woman who won Wendell Phillips to the cause of the slave.

Around him glowed her luminous sympathy. It lured him to become the knight of the lowly, and blended with the student lamp of his home.

How often in the physical and moral struggles of the world, a woman has belted on her lover's sword!

It was the intuition of her counsel that inspired him to the end. She often said to him, "Wendell, don't shilly shally." He did as she told him to—I mean he took her advise.

At the end she could sing, "John Anderson My Jo."

One day he looked out of his law office, and saw a mob of the best dressed citizens of Boston. They were dragging a pale faced, hatless man, along the streets with

a rope tied around him. He was a poor, crudely educated printer boy. He had persisted, in spite of discouragement, poverty and abuse, in publishing a paper called the "Liberator," which demanded emancipation. His name was William Loyd Garrison. He had been speaking at a meeting of the Boston female anti-slavery society. A mob of prominent "gentlemen" had broken up the meeting, and the mayor of the city was powerless to control it.

In the month of November, 1837, Elijah P. Lovejoy was murdered at Alton, Illinois, while defending his printing press from a mob. He had been publishing articles against another mob that had lynched a negro.

A meeting was called at Faneuil Hall by the friends of law and order. But it was packed with prominent citizens who were in sympathy with the riot. The attorney general of Massachusetts made a speech defending the mob. He compared the slaves to a menagerie of wild beasts, and the rioters who murdered Lovejoy, to the orderly mob that threw the tea overboard in Boston Harbor. Wendell Phillips, then twenty-six years old, took the platform to reply.

It was in that hall of Colonial memories,—the restoration of the cradle of liberty—that once was concordant with the eloquence of Adams and Otis. It had vibrated to tongues on which rested the swift fire that leaped to the priming of Lexington's muskets. Around its walls hung the venerated pictures of the pilgrim patriots.

As the attorney general's words died away, the olden inspiration must have lingered over the platform.

Phillips made a logical and impassioned speech, that was tuned to the clearest hymns of liberty, old Peter Faneuil's cradle ever rocked to.

Replying to the influential and popular attorney general, he said :

"When I heard the gentleman lay down principles which place the murderers of Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips would have broken into voice, to rebuke the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead.

"Sir, for the sentiment he has uttered on soil consecrated by the prayers of the Puritans and the blood of the patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up."

In that speech he crossed the river of Caesar. He had taken strong ground at a critical moment against the overwhelming pro-slavery sentiment of the city. He was numbered at once with the abolitionists. His circle of society was horrified. Many doors were closed to him. His family were ready to go into mourning, and thought of placing him in an insane asylum. His clients left him.

Another Massachusetts man was given a ticket to Rhode Island. He, whose native land, whose home, was in the sunny Arcady of culture;—in the chill Siberia of Ostracism, became emancipation's laureled exile.

From that time until the great president issued the proclamation of emancipation, and the ballot was given to the negro, the slave was his client.

It would be a long story to tell in detail. The anti-slavery cause as it grew, had its compliment of soldiers and statesmen, of editors and poets. But without room for dispute or query, we have now found its orator.

I wish I could describe to those of you who never heard him, Wendell Phillips on the platform. There with the grace of a genial gentleman, stood the philosophic student of history, the cultured,—although in many things, the superficial,—scholar; imagination's language wizard; the classic illustrator; the man of facile memory and nimble wit; the past master of invective. His manner was simple and conversational. He never seemed to make an effort. You can take up his speeches and read bitter things in them. But they did not always seem bitter while he was saying them—he mentioned them so pleasantly. The conversational tone was animated and compelling.

His voice has been described as like the strains of Paganini's violin. That is a fiddlestick story. No mortal ever had a voice like the play of the old, one string fiddler of Genoa. But it was a clear, pleasant, musical voice. It cut syllables out like cameos, without suggestion of an effort to be precise in pronunciation. Inflection and emphasis shaded and differentiated meanings, something after the manner of Booth's reading of Hamlet.

I have heard speakers who tried to catch his conversational style, but never any one who made a real success of it.

I doubt not a listener who was in rapport with Wendell Phillips, at his best, might have felt as if he were listening to a violin. A fiddle can be made to talk. It can tell of storm and sunshine,—of fear and hate, and love. There is a silent subtle music of thought, that

can be invoked alike by the poet, the master of the violin, and the artist of eloquence. It makes a viol of the heart strings, and Wendell Phillips could play on it, for he was a poet.

The audience is really the instrument, and the speaker the player. The quality of each varies. It takes a good audience, as well as a good speaker to make a real speech. The man on the platform should know how to tune his fiddle, and keep it strung to pitch.

Once Phillips was speaking to a crowd that was discordant. They tried to drown his voice with yells. He simply stepped to the front of the platform and leaned over where the stenographers were reporting. Then he began talking to them in a low tone that no one else could hear. Of course the audience were hushed—out of curiosity. He looked up and said, "Howl on. Three thousand of you can drown my voice to night:—but through these pencils I speak to thirty millions of the American people tomorrow morning." Then they listened. The fiddle was in tune again.

The speaker on the platform appeared like a rare host who was entertaining the audience as his guests. He seemed to have something to say for every one, and said it as if he were very much interested in them.

Before the rebellion, the Richmond Inquirer said, "Wendell Phillips is an infernal machine set to music."

When the sentiment he touched upon appealed to his deeper nature, the voice still conversational, reached out and grew serious and intense. There was fire and suppressed emotion beneath its level calm. It was a bell

that called around the platform to illustrate his theme, the thronging phantoms of myth and story, of legend and laughter and song. History and the noble dead brought treasures. Whenever I have heard him speak, his thought lingered with me for days like some ballad's mellow rhyme.

There is an eloquence of suggestion. It is in all the work of the masters of the ideal. A picture, a poem, a marble statue, set us thinking. An illustration often impels the thought vibrations more than an hour of realistic argument. Then comes the realistic critic with his little pocket tape line. He brings his dictionary and his grammar, and his work on logic under his arm. He is up in the latest quirks of pronunciation. And he says of Wendell Phillips' "Rhetoric! He did not prove his premises by rule as Daniel Webster would have done." But he forgets that the very fact that even he was made to listen, and set to thinking of the possibilities of the might be, was the surest evidence the logic was there by suggestion.

Phillips made every listener another orator, to speak to an audience of one, and elaborate the address to his own soul.

His faculty of illustration was more than happy. It seemed always ready to score a bunch of lucky hits. He drew from all history and literature—ancient and modern. He had a way of referring to fact and story, that in a few words made the audience realize the pith of the allusion,—or the *illusion*,—perhaps I should say. This

was true even for those who were unfamiliar with the reference.

In this he was dangerous. A pat illustration is often taken for a demonstration—especially in a spellful transmission of ideas from the platform to the benches.

But an illustration is never a real twin. No two peas in the same pod are exactly alike. It is a case of the difference between Tiddledewinks and Tiddledewee.

“Tiddledewinks and Tiddledewee
Are two little fishes that live in the sea.
They look just alike, and everybody thinks
That Tiddledewee is Tiddledewinks.”

One of his biographers states that he never descended to pompous declamation or spread eagle rhetoric. This is true of many of his speeches, and he was never pompous. But his flights sometimes suggested the wide wings of the skyey falcon. Still if the bird is unhooded by a poet, we like to see its rise.

His conversational manner on the platform, did much to drive the old noisy and pompous style of speaking out of favor.

In his time, the lyceum lecture was at high tide. Speakers were well paid financially. He would lecture on literary and historical subjects for a compensation, and speak without price if he was allowed to talk on slavery.

He has been called a fanatic; but how different from the fanatic of the fagot and the torture chamber! He was the enthusiast of progress.

No man was ever earnest on a subject, and just

earnest enough. He was like the old lady's sheet, when she made it too long, and said, "At any rate there was enough of the same to make less of it."

He was impatient of the politician who temporized with the South to serve his personal ambition. He had no use for Daniel Webster, and called him "Sir Pertinax McSycophant."

He thought a distinguished and scholarly New England orator was slow as to modern reform, and he spoke of "The cuckoo lips of Edward Everett."

The constitution upheld slavery. So much the worse for the constitution. Then to him, it became, as he was wont to say,—“A compact with death and a league with Hell.” The flag was “Hate's polluted rag;” and the Federal Eagle, “The vulture of the Union.”

But when on the mast of Sumpter, that flag was whirled by the wind of cannon balls, he spoke for it with the forceful eloquence of the patriot.

He spoke for right in the abstract, as he saw the right. Constitutions and statutes were barriers of parchment and ink. When in his way, he turned a handspring over them.

He was never troubled by fear of consequences. He called the French Revolution “The scarecrow of the ages.”

Phillips could not wait for the emancipation proclamation, and Abraham Lincoln was once the target of his scorn. He called him “The tortoise president.” He said he was “A first rate second rate man,” and “A pawn on

the political chess board whose value was in his position."

He wished to illustrate the assertion that Lincoln had no mind of his own, and only moved and did things when he was crowded. So he likened him to the jumping jack sometimes seen in grocery windows. It has its arms pivoted to the crank of a coffee mill, and seems to be doing the turning, while the real movement comes from the machine.

But hear what Wendell Phillips, the agitator, afterwards thought of the martyr of the republic:

"Coming time will put him in that galaxy of Americans, which makes our history the day star of the nations:—Washington, Hamilton, Franklin, Jefferson and Jay. History will add his name to the bright list with a more loving claim on our gratitude than either of them."

If Phillips had been trained as a soldier he would have made a cavalry officer. He was the light cavalry leader of the anti-slavery reformers. He was not free from the tricks of charging too far, and of firing into his own lines.

Phillips always dared to take the unpopular side. He probably loved to do it.

In 1851 Louis Kossuth, the carnate idol of Hungarian revolution—the patriot of the Blue Danube's shore, came to America. He came as the emissary of his country. The sons of Hungary were facing the steel, or languishing in the dungeons of Austria. Kossuth came from a despot's bastille, to plead for the enslaved land of his nativity. In politic vein he caressed the slave owner with his winning eloquence, and had no word of sympathy for the slave of America.

The anti-slavery leagues forgot that he came to ask support for his own people, and not to criticise our institutions.

While he was the center of Western popularity, Wendell Phillips tilted at him with an oration of invective, that helped to immortalize the European liberator more than it aided the anti-slavery cause. But it was a great speech. Kossuth was given a personally conducted wiggling, that suggested the ones Phillip of Macedon and Cataline, caught from Demosthenes and Cicero.

In contrast with his speech on Kossuth, are his lectures on Daniel O'Connel, the Irish orator; Toussaint L'Overture, the negro liberator of St. Domingo, and his utterances on John Brown of Ossawatimie.

In O'Connel he found a man after his own heart. This lecture is one of his master pieces. Mellow mouth Dan. was the sorcerer of the Irish hustings. He had touched a Blarney stone that had more of magic than the famous one in Ireland's old castle.

The oration on the St. Domingo chief will live in our language for its beauty. The peroration—in its riot of eulogy—is, so far as I know, the finest glimpse of the sailing eagle, in the horizon of English rhetoric. *

* In this lecture Mr. Phillips, to say the least, had been extravagant in his estimate of the St. Domingo Chief. He closed with the following passage, which is taken literally from the authorized edition of his speeches.

"You think me a fanatic to-night, for you read history, not with your eyes, but with your prejudices. But fifty years hence, when Truth gets a hearing, the Muse of History will put Phocion for the Greek, and Brutus for the Roman, Hampden for England, Fayette for France, choose Washington as the bright, consummate flower of our earlier civilization, and

Phillips' lecture on the Lost Arts was given before more audiences than any other contribution to the American Lyceum.

The life of Phillips was often threatened, even in Boston, and mobs have tried to burn his house. In the early times of the anti-slavery excitement he and his associates were frequently mobbed.

But the anti-slavery conventions had their humorous episodes as well. A cranky woman named Abigail Fulsom haunted their meetings and insisted on making speeches. Emerson used to call her "The flea of conventions." It was often necessary to remove her by gentle force, which she never resisted. One day Mr. Phillips and two other gentlemen placed her in a chair, and were carrying her down the aisle. They had passed to the middle of the interested audience when Abigail's shrill voice piped up with the exclamation,

"I am better off than my master was. He had only one ass to ride, but I have three to carry me."

The laugh was not always on Wendell. At a time when he had been bitter against the churches for winking at the sin of slavery, and when he would have been lynched at sight, anywhere south of Mason and Dixon's line, he lectured in Cincinnati. A convention of ministers had been in session at the same time. He seated

John Brown the ripe fruit of our noonday (thunders of applause), then, dipping her pen in the sunlight, will write in the clear blue, above them all, the name of the soldier, the statesman, the martyr, Toussaint L'Ouverture. (Long continued applause.)"

himself in a car the next morning that was well filled with clergymen. One of them came up to him, and spoke in a voice that all could hear :

"Are you Mr. Phillips?"

"I am sir."

"Are you trying to free the niggers?"

"Yes, sir, I am an abolitionist."

"Well, why do you preach your doctrine up here? Why don't you go over to Kentucky to talk?"

"Excuse me," said Phillips,— "Are you a preacher?"

"I am, sir."

"Are you trying to save sinners from Hell?"

"Yes, sir, that is my business."

"Well, why don't you go there?"

When he was preparing his speeches he shut himself up in his den. If I may use Shakespeare's words in another key, he 'crept into his study of imagination.' Ah! The beautiful guests that come in lonely hours;— the mysterious voices that whisper secrets from the blue! Then come the goodly company of the famous dead;— those who have sent their thoughts down the long distance wire of time. Around him were shapes of dreams that were rising to a place in the imagery of language.

How seldom does a man find a friend who can help him entertain that splendid company. But in his case, the wife, who lived out her years in the chamber of an invalid, made a rare hostess for his thronging fancies.

He did not spare himself from wearing the hair cloth shirt of preparation. But its discipline was eased,

"With the fervor of invention,
The rapture of creating."

When we are interested in a subject, we have set traps for ideas. They are baited with the magnet of curiosity. Thoughts come into them while we dream, as animals into the hunter's snares by night.

Wendell Phillips has been called visionary and a dreamer. We all leave our everyday life and become dreamers at times. But many of us are ashamed to own up to the streak of poetry in our natures.

If we would know the real person, we must know the life he leads when he emigrates to the cloudy castled clime—when the fire is lighted at the spirit's hearthstone. We can judge it by the treasures that are brought back from the far country. He always had his mental purses full of fairy gold, and scattered it like a princely mariner. He was a dreamer; but his dream was of a nobler humanity, and he put his heart into making it a reality.

“O splendid longings, thoughts and fancies
That tread the city of the soul,
How few of all your spirit lances
Arrive where duty's trumpets roll.”

But his lances lit with finer lightnings when the call of duty blew.

The conservative spirit of every age calls such men idealists. But it is their dreams that have lifted the planet out of barbarism. The next century to the one they lived in, generally appreciates them. One of Mr. Phillips' favorite platform quotations, was the stanza from Lowell's Crisis.

"For humanity sweeps onward:
Where today the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas
With the silver in his hands.
Far in front the cross stands ready and
The crackling fagots burn:
While the hooting mob of yesterday,
In silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes
Into History's golden urn."

Today, many a man will tell you Wendell Phillips was a fanatic, and a demagogue. He often called himself a fanatic and an Ishmaelite. Carlos Martyn said, "He was a citizen of the 20th century, sent as a specimen to the 19th."

Wendell Phillips devoted his life, his oratory and his fortune, to the cause of reform. When emancipation came, he turned his attention to the causes of labor, of temperance, and of female suffrage. Again he was called a fanatic. Instead of one woman, it was now supposed to be all of them that had turned his head.

He could change his mind in politics. Once he was a free trader, but after a careful study of the question, he favored protection to American industry. But with his views on female suffrage we could guess how he—and his constituency—would stand today as to a duty on gloves and hosiery.

The cause of the laboring man, which he began to plead soon after the war, when it was in its infancy, is today the great American problem. He insisted that it was intimately connected with temperance, and that it needed woman's ballot to settle both questions.

He made a good fight for the ten and eight hour

laws. After that he believed—for a while at any rate—in equalization of property by excessive and cumulative taxation.

He spoke in behalf of humanity and education for the Indians. It is finally coming. An Indian does not have to be dead before he is good.

Every cause he ever advocated was a dream of somebody to lift the oppressed, or the repressed of society. He never advocated a cause that did not have a moral lift to it.

The struggle of Ireland was never put so clearly before the public on this side of the water as it was in his language.

He was energetic in securing prison reform, and kind treatment of the insane; and in the movement for a metropolitan police for Boston.

When the rebellion came, he was a pioneer in the organization of colored troops. More than any other man, he was the organizer of the Massachusetts regiment,—the first colored regiment enlisted in a free state. It was commanded by Colonel Shaw, who fell at the front of his dusky yoemen in the assault on Fort Wagner.

General Green, of revolutionary renown, was the first American to advocate colored regiments. His plan was not accepted. What its realization may mean in our history we cannot tell.

Mr. Phillips had a comfortable fortune. His wife had another. He had leisure to become an orator and to keep himself in training. The struggle for existence never troubled him. With him the bread and butter

problem was a choice of the Boston markets. He was the partician pleading the cause of the lowly, when he might have led a life of pleasure.

Nora Perry wrote of him :

“Born on the heights and in the purple bred,
He chose to walk the lowly ways instead,
That he might lift the wretched and defend
The rights of those who languished for a friend.”

But his fortune kept him away from the practical side of life, and helped to make him visionary.

While we groped amid the shadows of the revolution, Lafayette came in his youth, and covered us with his sword. It was a brave and generous action. But the gratitude of a people was his reward ; and he became at once the friend of Washington, and the idol of the Continentals.

The soldier in battle sees his flag, and hears the wild horn of Roncesvalles winding. He feels the buoyant lift along the line of comrades. But it is not so with the lonely champion of a despised cause. Discouragement was often the lot of Phillips. He never had a party behind him to sustain him, and take kindly to his speeches. In Congress he would have been out of place. The politician must be careful of his words. He must suppress his thoughts at his peril, for they will cost him votes. A politician doesn't have views. You couldn't find one about him even with an X-ray photograph. You couldn't take his photograph, because he is a negative himself, and not the view. The mind of a politician is a looking glass. Across its surface the inconstant whims of the populace.

fit. But the fitful dampness of every rising storm clouds it so that it cannot—reflect.

No man can be a true orator unless he dares to think, and then to think out loud.

Herbert Spencer once refused to have his name put up for the English Parliament. He said: 'Parliament is the index on the dial. It will always point where the pressure of the people crowds it, and no higher.' He added that he could have more influence on the laws if he staid outside.

Phillips once allowed his name to run on the union labor and temperance ticket for governor, when an election was impossible. But he was never governor, nor senator, nor congressman, nor general,—nor even of the good old Kentucky peerage of the colonels. As we have seen, he was too much of a temperance man to be a colonel. He was plain *Mr.* Wendell Phillips. The slaves he worked for, had no reward to offer him.

If he could have followed the conservative trend of his generation, what honor of statecraft or diplomacy might not have been his? He might have been the senator from Massachusetts. The golden bee of the presidency might have strummed its tune in his bonnet. He might have been governor of the old Bay State; might have graced the chair that Endicott and Winthrop and Adams once filled;—yes, and the chair of Sir Henry Vane.

It was of Vane, that Phillips spoke in strains of homage. He often alluded to him in addresses, and he was his example and patron saint.

What a life model! Harry Vane! As we invoke his name, we can see New England's colonial governor—standing in the morning of his youth, and in the ruddy dawn of republican liberty. How all that was constant and best in the voyage of the Mayflower, ^{trails} ~~sheds~~ its arbutus fragrance around the May of his manhood. The faith of young republics looks out from the old time falling clusters of his sunny hair. In others of his time, the Puritan essence was tainted with the grim discipline of Geneva. But in him—glowed the liberal and progressive spirit of the newer age to come. Too wise and tolerant, too broadly human, for the Spartan colony, he virtually shared the fate of Roger Williams. Off the wild Atlantic coast, his white sail filled for old England once more, there to buffet Fate's wilder tides. In the old country he became the leader of the Long Parliament, the friend of Milton,—and as Clarendon classes him,—the peer of Hampden.

With the same liberality he had displayed on this side the ocean, he opposed the usurpation of Cromwell, and the execution of King Charles.

He was first to advocate government by written constitutions granted by the people.

But the old England was like the new. After the restoration he was tried for treason and convicted. Once more he became a pilgrim,—a pilgrim faring from the tower of London to the scaffold. And there, as Hawthorn said—"He laid down the wisest head in England on the block."

When the bright steel of the Stuart fell on his neck,

it quenched the noblest heart that had beat for toleration on either side the sea.

To Americans it is memorable among England's executions; for there the first Anglo Saxon martyr to constitutional popular government fell.

O England! England! Thou that persecuted the patriots!

But gallant Sir Harry! Your spirit, humanity loyal, was of the twentieth century also.

In personal character, Wendell Phillips was honest. His courage was both moral, and fearless of physical danger. He was sympathetic and truthful. His generosity gave away nearly all he had in kindness to others, and left little of his ancestral fortune for probate. He probably came as near as any of our race of frailty are likely to come, to having the simple, brave and kindly heart that goes to make a gentleman.

It is a riddle to solve why a man so simple, conscientious and kindly in private life, should have attacked with remorseless invective those who differed from him. Often they were men who were working in a different and wiser way for the same end that he was.

In a speech which he made in 1853, he scored with vituperation every prominent anti-slavery man in the country who did not go to the immediate limit with Garrison and himself. Even John P. Hale, United States Senator from New Hampshire, came in for a share. Hale was the pioneer abolitionist in the United States Senate. But he had committed the sin—in the eyes of a few—of signing a petition for a monument to Henry

Clay, who had died the year before. Clay was considered an abolitionist by the South, but he was not a radical one. He was in favor of compensated emancipation. So was Abraham Lincoln. It was the one solution of the slavery question that could have avoided civil war.

Phillips then continued his whooping war dance, around the fresh made grave of the eloquent Kentucky Statesman.

He was not one of those who held up the arms of Lincoln in the dark hours of the civil war. He said many cruel things about him. But because the war is over, and Phillips and Lincoln are both dead, it would be cruel to repeat the worst of them in a talk like this. Some of them are published in the first volume of his addresses, in a speech on the "Cabinet," delivered in 1862.

In those days for men to differ on questions of the hour, was for them to antagonize with the fierce passion of Anglo Saxon revolution.

He could not compromise. He personified Ruskin's adage of 'Saying what you think today in words as hard as cannon balls, even if you have to take them back tomorrow.'

As an orator he was cursed with a fatal facility for epigrammatic invective. He simply thought out loud about people in terms of caustic satire. Try the same experiment yourselves with the folks you know, and you will be as lonesome as Wendell Phillips was.

He became a public speaker before mob audiences. He was often insulted, and his voice drowned by their

cat calls. It was natural that his talent for sarcasm should develop.

He was in ecstasy when the storm of the rebellion broke. He then supposed the constitution was shattered.

He made a jubilee speech on disunion and said:

"The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice. The covenant with death is annulled. The agreement with hell is broken to pieces.

"All hail then disunion. Beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings."

The good tidings were, that the pathway to the result he hoped for, lay through battle and hospital; through fever-swamp bivouac, and prison pen.

Well! The Anglo Saxons were always like the skirmish line of modern armies. They have advanced by a series of rushes—each rush representing a civil war. Between rushes they lie down for a while.

No man who is a fighter in this world is faultless. The bright rapier is whipped out, and we hear it whirr like a bow string's twang. Even the flat of the whinyard smarts where it hits. In the melee it often strikes the wrong man.

The orator who speaks often before popular audiences, says more than he has time to think and study out. He swims on the cresting wave of the hustings, and loves the rise and fall and roar of the surges.

While he has no claim to the name of statesman,—Wendell Phillips must, I think, be classed with the Puritan revolutionists of Anglo Saxon history. He was deeply in sympathy with the type of Hampden and Vane

and Adams. They were the men who walked forward into the breach while others followed. Gentle by nature, but stern and incorruptable as John Milton himself, their voices rose above the onset swell of Marston Moor;—above the colonial turmoil of the revolution, and the revel of the rifle vengeance round Virginia's hills. Those pioneers in the wilderness of liberty have planted the standards of progress on its Look-out Mountains.

But the others were struggling for their own class. Phillips and Garrison worked for the slave.

It is a trait of the strong men of our race that they like our people, will not compromise when they once get started.

We cannot explain Wendell Phillips until we look at his religion.

Stop and think who he was. He was the pure bred descendent of the Puritans. His English ancestor came over in the Arbella, the ship that followed the Mayflower.

He has been called an infidel. But in his case it is not necessary to refer to differences of opinion, as to whether the story of Bethlehem is a divine revelation, or the mythology of Palestine. I have lived in New England and I think I realize what the stern devotion of the Puritan religion is. We cannot account for the phenomena of Wendell Phillips,—for his being the revolutionist or the messenger,—until we consider his religion.

He was trained to the Bible and the catechism in the old fashioned way at his mother's knee. When he was fourteen years old, he experienced conversion under the preaching of Lyman Beecher. He consecrated himself

to the faith, and prayed that, "Whenever a thing be wrong, it may have no power of temptation over me: whenever a thing be right, it may take no courage to do it." He went to college with his mother's Bible, and Doddridge's Expositor as his bosom companions.

Now do you know what sort of influence that kind of religion is, when it gets its grip on a scion of the Puritan stock? That faith had been bred into his being for generations. It was the same English tissue that had shriveled to ashes in the flames of Smithfield, and gone with a prayer on the lips, to the scaffold and the stake, for conscience sake. It never retracted an essential of its faith, to be saved from either. A young man of that stock, who passes from "Nature to grace," is liable to turn from a life of pleasure and become a missionary to Africa.

Wendell Phillips was the same kind of infidel the Puritan was, when he separated from the established church of England. The pulpit of the United States upheld slavery, and denied the Bible to three millions of slaves. Then to him, it no longer represented the man of Gallilee. He turned his language gatling on the Pharasees of the synagogues, and became a worshiper at his household altar. Those who knew him best, tell us that he never saw a moment when his Puritan faith grew faint. He once said from the platform: "Mine is the old faith of New England." Hear him when he was within a few hours of his death, and his mind was clear and calm as ever. He quoted the words of Hupfeld, "The whole history of humanity points to Christ, and finds in him

its centre and solution." He told a friend that 'Nothing but the spirit of Christ had enabled him to suffer and endure what he had.'

That man had consecrated himself to the cause of the slave, and for one reason, because he believed Africans had souls to save. For years it looked hopeless and discouraging. His own class turned away from him, and he was laughed at and ridiculed. He might never live to see the end. He needs must be faithful unto death.

And yet, dyed in the wool protestant as he was, he could respect other religions.

Once I heard him telling an audience of an old cathedral in Italy—St. Peter's. He had seen the Catholics at their worship, and had noticed the equality of all classes at the altar. He could wrap a world of meaning in a short quotation, and he recited with an elocution I can remember yet:—

"I love the ever open door
That welcomes to the house of God,
I love the wide spread marble floor,
By every foot in freedom trod."

He was like all the messengers, and prophets and poets:—he was a seer. Mental projection takes them out of self into sympathy with others. I doubt not, Wendell Phillips had in imagination stood with Harry Vane on the scaffold, as one friend might stand by another.

No one today can read his speech from Henry Ward Beecher's pulpit, when John Brown's fate was pending; and then what he said a few days afterwards standing

over his grave at North Elba, and doubt that in spirit he stood beside old Ossawatimie on the Virginia scaffold;—that he wished to hold the last warm clasp of the brawny hand, as that cheerful and misguided soul stepped off the planet.

If Phillips had lived a few hundred years ago, the block might have been his own last pillow. He would have reclined on it, I doubt not, with the same tranquil courage that Vane and Brown displayed;—the same with which he faced the mobs that were ready to hang him.

Many of the Puritan revolutionists he was so deeply in sympathy with, show beneath the iron logic of soldier and statesman, the mystic vein of poetry. It is blended with the fervor of their faith. The lode ran deepest in John Milton. But in Oliver Cromwell's soul, glowed the eternal dream of beauty and religious mysticism, like the muse of King David's psalms.

Far off cloudland trances drift across the dying speech of Vane—broken here and there—as the untimely ruffle of the Stuart trumpets drowns his voice.

John Brown was a Puritan New Englander of the same temperament. On his ride to the scaffold, he talked with a poet's outlook, of the hazy highlands of the Blue Ridge.

Those men saw the eternal vistas in their day dreams; and the view held them to their life long purpose.

Without reference to what we believe ourselves,—they should be judged by the sincerity of their faith. This

weary vale looked far off to them. Their refuge in time of trouble was the shadow of the Rock of Ages.

Wendell Phillips, the revolutionist, was a student of the philosophy of history. He was a daring thinker. He loved the simple truth, and from the heights he saw it in the ideal.

The sculptured faces of the revolutionists of the past are in our public libraries. They look out on the treasures of thought they opened up for the future. Their bronzes in the City squares are commanding the rear guard of liberty. But we think a niche in corridors of madness fitting for those of our day; and so thought the populates of the past of the ones we venerate.

After all, how are we poor mortals to tell the wise reformer from the cloud of mistaken ones;—or from the agitator who itches for popular notoriety, and whose idea of government is an experiment station managed by himself?

In 1881 occurred the centennial of the Phi Beta Kappa society of Harvard. There were gathered representatives of the scholarship and the intellect of that famous Alma Mater. For the first time they had asked Wendell Phillips, who was one of their number, to address them. They were of the conservative class that had generally opposed him.

The philosophy of his life appears in the oration he delivered there on "The Scholar in a Republic."

He believed in behalf of progress:—first, in an insurrection of thought. In lands where that would not work

out the problem, then the appeal to arms; and if both were impossible,—progress,—even with dynamite.

In two startling passages he eulogized the French Revolution, and the Russian Nihilist. These climaxes, his critics have used to prove him a fanatic. He said :

“The French Revolution is the greatest, the most unmixed, the most unstained and wholly perfect blessing Europe has had in modern times, unless we may possibly except the reformation, and the invention of printing.”

What did he mean? Let us see.

The liberties of France, so far as the common people were concerned, lay dormant under the rule of the nobles. The men in the millinery of ruffs and velvet lived wholly for pleasure. They engineered no great industrial enterprises that gave back wages and homes to the millions. They gave no thought for the Adam clay of manhood in the populace.

The oppression of the medieval past, stifled the people with the carbonic acid gas of the very air their rulers seemed to breathe first. But they waked up before the choke damp finished its work. The castle crypts were full of old wine. The people broke in and tapped it. Then they broached the ancient vintage that flowed down from the heart wave of Charlemagne. And the spigots of the guillotine ran, until the drug was out of the market quotations, and they had torn up the vineyards root and branch. The very species of that aristocracy of ruffed dudes and painted courtezans, was extinct like the dodo. Some good folks went with them. But the idols of Europe were smashed. The spell of the divine right of

kings was broken. There was fresh air for the insurrectionists of thought to breathe;—and kingdoms were awakened to make the progress of the last hundred years.

This is what we may read between his lines.

But what of the temperament that could dream of dungeons like the Conciergerie—the human stockyards of Paris:—of shambles where the 'Terror's demon' cleaver slashed:—of Jeanne Roland's white neck, unveiled on the scaffold for the bite of lusting steal:—of innocence and deviltry rounded up in the same slaughter pens:—and call the revolution—an "Unstained and wholly perfect blessing?"

The answer is, that it was the temperament of the orator,—and like the poet—he rides a runaway horse. But as the poet's famous racer had wings, and we now belong to the flying age,—perhaps I ought to say the modern orator sometimes sails a welkin-craft.

The dynamite talk in that speech has been cited as evidence of madness. The impression seemed to go out that he abetted the bomb throwers of America. He did not. The foreigner who comes to the United States to be a terror, is a renegade from the struggle of his own land. He has deserted it, and come where it is too safe to talk. Phillips disowned him. But what was Nihilism in the land of the Czar? It was the rising wave of Russian thought.

In that empire an idea is a felony, and thought accessory before the fact to the crime. At times, a magazine like the Century, before it can cross its border, passes a press censor, and has every page on which the light of lib-

erality shines, blotted out with ink as black as smut. The land was silent to the voice of liberty, except when a Nihilist spoke and died. The prisons of Siberia and the tomb closed over the lacerated bodies of daring thinkers. The Nihilists of Russia were its organized liberators.

Phillips was talking in 81. Some history that had recently taken place was fresh in the minds of his audience. Thought had been crowding for expression, and had been suppressed in the Russian way:—with exile, and the scaffold:—with the lash, that had not spared the youth of womanhood from ignominious death, inflicted on suspicion and without a trial. The military despot at whose nod that work had gone along, after repeated warnings, was tried by a secret society of revolutionary liberty.

One day on the streets of St. Petersburg something hit the pavement. There was a flash and then a bang. In Russia the tribunal of assassination is the court of last resort. When the feathery smoke wraith of the dynamite blew by,—it was the ghost of an emperor that had passed.

Phillips told them that:—

'In such a land as Russia, dynamite and the dagger were the necessary and the proper substitutes for Faneuil Hall and the daily press;' that, 'For Americans stung by a three penny tea tax, to pile Bunker Hill with granite, and then disown the Sam Adams and George Washingtons of St. Petersburg;—when their naked maidens were flogged to death in the market place;—to recommend them to a century of dumb submission, was the worst cant that was ever canted.'

Surely he was an intellectual dynamiter,—the mod-

ern type of the Puritan fanatic. His call was for the Lexington shot of revolution, whether fired on a village green in New England, or in a palace by the Finland Gulf.

Russia is growing in liberalism because of Nihilism. But one of the world hopes for tomorrow should be, that the liberals may reach the promised land of equal law, without dynamite and dagger, or French Revolution.

The fate of men and women who dare to think of liberty, in Russia, Turkey, and Spain,—wherever the primeval curse of evolution broods,—is what?

Sometimes it is known, and often the prison does not give up its secret.

Go to the Sphinxes of old and silent Egypt; knock at the veiled temples and ask of the mysteries of Isis; and you would find out hidden things as soon.

We flatter ourselves that we live in a higher civilization. We live on a rude barbarian planet.

Shall we say the man who spoke the Phi Beta Kappa oration, had not trod the crystal peaks of liberty? Was it a landscape or a worldscape he focused?

In his own country the despised and humble African of the plantation, appealed to his sense of justice; and he said to him: All the bright years of my manhood and age are yours,—yours till the "Land of the Free" holds no slave on its shores.

On the 2nd day of February, 1884, at the age of seventy-two, after an illness of a few days, Wendell Phillips died.

Then there fell a hush,—like the necromantic lull of Paganini's strings.

What had ceased? I do not know. My impressions may not be right. I have been trying to recall an early memory:—and Schiller wrote:—

“Tell him that when he is a man he must remember the dreams of his youth.”

It was long ago when I listened to the one, who still seems to me to have been the finest platform speaker I ever heard. The woolly mist that hung along the meadows, and the green pastures,—where we wandered in the morning of life,—may have clouded my vision from critical definition:—the drift of the dawn that lifts from the spider's dewy tents.

I wish I might look into the deeps we may not fathom, and draw inspiration from the Plutarch of a hundred years hence.

I do not know. So perhaps we may answer by his own, and the old New England credo. Many of you will think there should be no other answer.

What had ceased? It was the messenger of progress—the Anglo Saxon revolutionist—the Puritan Christian—the patrician who walked among the lowly—the ideal artist of eloquence—the poet from some far off sunland.

At last Boston understood. The people of the city that had shrunk from the enthusiasm of his morning, as

they would from an outcast, became a mourning host at the eventide.

It was in Faneuil Hall once more, where they had laid him;—where he had challenged the dragon with the spirit lance of his youth;—where the golden melody of his manhood had so often mingled with the ghostly echoes of historic voices. Youth had vanished, and manhood past. Age was gone. The mystic change of the passing had stolen, like the twilight shadows, over the tranquil face of the New England orator. It had become like one of the pictures on the wall.

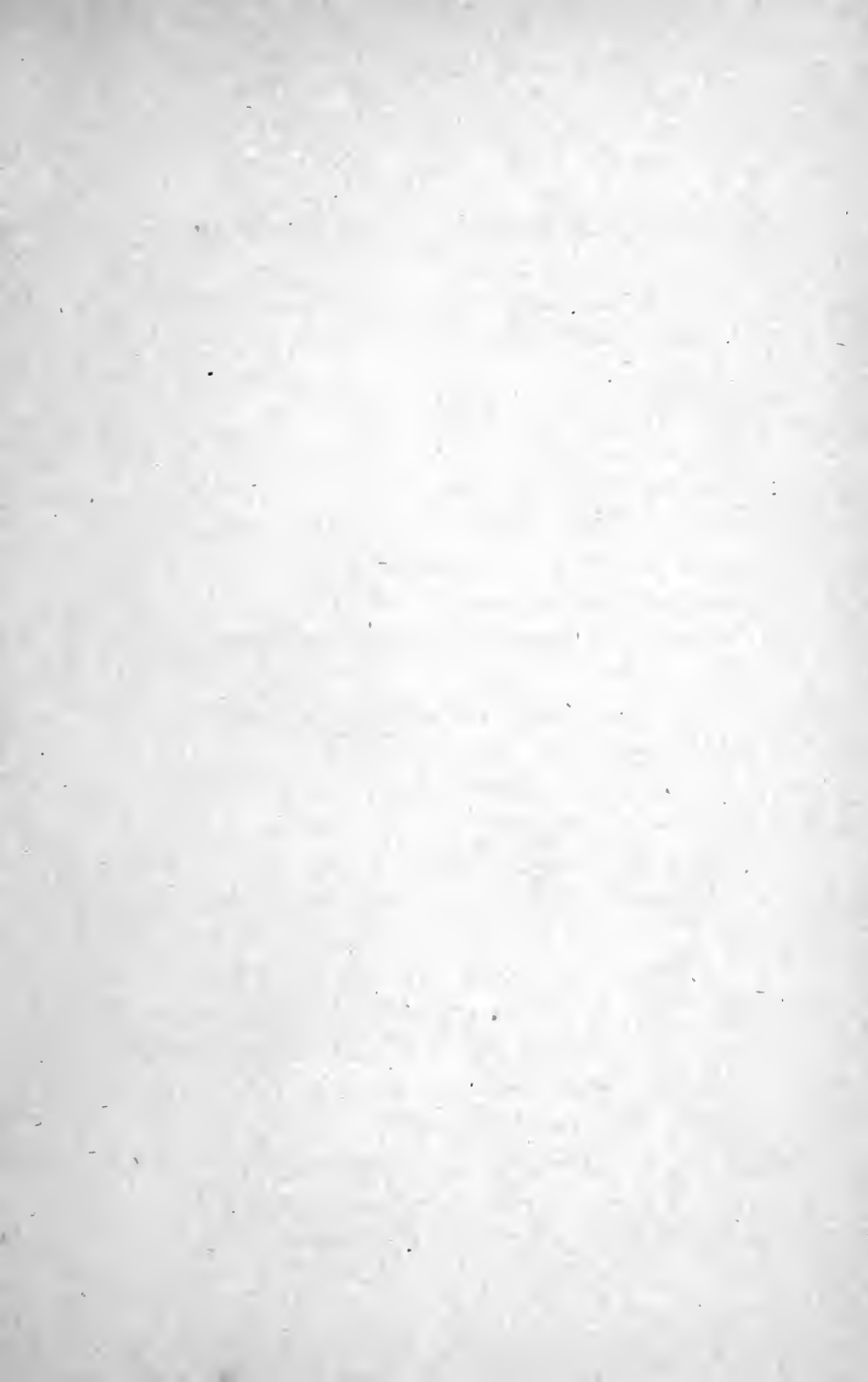
Silence rested on the spellful lips, calmed beneath the rose's seal of mystery.

The stormy winds—the Euroclydons—that blew so rudely round the voyage, were stilled.

According to the faith of the Mayflower, the dreamer—the mariner of the upper blue—who brought us the bright gold of the Starry Indies—had anchored in the peaceful port. His tread was on the firm eternal piers.

O city by the Pilgrim shore—glean not his ashes for the urn of story. As the fleecy fog blows down the years, he is not dead. For the Artist Memory will paint his picture in the fresco of the exiles, by the side of Roger Williams and Governor Vane.

Knight of the twentieth century—and of all the centuries—olden and yet to be—your message was a clear call from out the glooms of selfish law.



(The following was published in "Detroit Every Saturday," in the issue of Feb. 2nd, 1884.)

LONGFELLOW.

"Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea:
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of the dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me,
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is singing, and saying still,
'A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.'"
—*Longfellow's "My Lost Youth."*

The ships from ocean's olden mysteries
At anchor swing amid the glancing seas;
And winds from portal islands ruff the trees.

A poet's vanished youth once lingered there.
His lyre was strung as if the native air
With youth immortal touched his spirit rare.

No bugler he, the rallies wild to sound,
That blow where legions ride the battle ground;
Nor freedom's tunes to wing the world around.

Not his the throb of love's warm passion beat:
Nor plaint of human wrong the murmur deep:
But his the meadows ripe that scholars reap.

Sweet lie the fields that knew that reaper's hand,
Where thoughtful autumns gild the harvest land,
Like amber sheaves his fruitful pages stand.

I turn the leaves and feel like one who dreams;
And sits beneath the lamp-light's penciled beams—
While all the perfumed air with music teems.

The curtain rises; soft the foot-lights glow,
And one by one with voices cadenced low,
His bright creations come and sing and go.

We wonder what strange gladness dawned for him,
When flushed with power those phantom forms to limn,
From cloudy fancy peered their shadows dim.

By laughing tides a dusky chieftain walks;
And long for him the Indian Undine talks—
In murmuring tunes that Minnehaha mocks.

Primeval forests fringe the ocean's sheen;
And constant gaze through sad Acadie's scene
Thy wistful—lonely eyes, Evangeline.

Then blend the Tuscan keys of Dante's song,—
The moaning music of the darker throng,—
With Saxon strains that now to us belong.

In rusted harness stalks a Norseman drear.
On rapid rhythmic hoofs rides Paul Revere.
The Wayside Inn sends forth a rouse of cheer.

And haunting still the old-time Plymouth shore,
Miles Standish walks his doughty rounds once more.
Demure Priscilla spins within the door.

I closed the book. A still entrancing spell
Of memory's music round me softly fell,
In which its Golden Legends seemed to dwell.

There thrilled the household words familiar grown;
And many a deep melodious bar alone,
A fragment floated,—from its lyric flown.

O Lute whose art our Western song refined,
Twas thine a pure idyllic charm to wind
Through all the gentler motions of the mind!

Where ruddy hearth-fires blaze by hanging cranes,
In evening groups around the ingle fanes,
Spring culture's graces from thy bright refrains.

To us the legends of the by-gone day,
Have climbed like twining spray on castles gray,
Up lattice rhythms of the artist's lay.

O sweet and serious song, whose mellow rhyme
Regales the night like bright Catawba wine;
There brims no future vintage of thy vine.

The voices of the night have ceased their swells,
And ebb like solemn tides of Bruges' bells,
The helmsman old, his ocean secret tells.*

At last O Mastersinger, unto thee;
Off mystic coasts the pilot gives the key
To wondrous hymns of some eternal sea.

The lay is hushed; the harp strings silent grow.
Again the bard his native land would know,
Beyond the hills where sinks the sunset glow.

His Curfew rings the gleam from dream-lit peaks,
O'er Alpine crags lies now the realm he seeks.
"Excelsior!" Tis youth immortal speaks!

His songs like prayers for which Sandalphon waits,
Make fragrant garlands round the starry gates,
From whence in youth the minstrel emigrates.

E. M. IRISH.

*Longfellow's, "The Secret of the Sea."

CHIDER.

(Spirit of Immortal Youth.)

After the German of Ruckert.

I passed where city gardens grew,
 (This tale the youth immortal told.)
 And asked when that old town was new,
 Of one who broke the mellow mould.
 He said:—and still he plied his spade:—
 “Who cares how old?
 These walls and towers were always made,
 To stand forever undecayed.

Five hundred years their cycle wore;
 And by that place I passed once more.

No wall nor arbor left its clue.
 Where flocks went grazing down the dell
 His lonely reed a shepherd blew.
 I asked what year the city fell.
 He said:—and on the pipe he played
 Some herd-boy's spell:—
 “The grass grows here, the leafy shade;
 And in this mead my fleeces strayed.”

Five hundred years crept by once more.
 I sought the vales I knew before.

And lo! beside a brimming mere,
 A fisher blithly threw his net.
 I asked, “When came the billows here?
 He rested from his toiling wet,
 And laughing, down his meshes laid.
 (Gleamed full the net.)
 “Since winds its marge with wave-foam sprayed,
 Along this strand the fishers wade.”

Five hundred years passed by once more
 And I returned to walk that shore.

The space an olden forest held.
 A hermit in its clearing stood;

And with his axe a tree he felled.

I asked how old he thought the wood.

Quoth he:—"It is eternal shade

And solitude.

Forever live I in this glade.

The trees bloom here and never fade."

Five hundred years slid by once more.

I thought to roam that wold of yore;—

And heard men shout the market calls

Along a city's thronging pave.

I asked them when they built the walls:—

Where vanished forest, flocks and wave?

The people cried:—no heed they paid:—

Nor answer gave.

So change eternal here is made,

That omens far-off fates delayed

When ages flit like those before,

My feet shall trend that way once more.

E. M. IRISH.

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